



Asiantaeth Cymorth
Cyfreithiol

Legal Aid
Agency

Introduction and Background

To all members of the Merthyr Tydfil, Cynon Valley and Mid Glamorgan & Miskin Police Station Duty Solicitor Schemes

Duty Solicitor Schemes

This is a further second consultation in relation to Duty Solicitor coverage within the Merthyr Tydfil police station Duty Solicitor Scheme which started when the Merthyr Tydfil police station custody hub was created in July 2014 and the Pontypridd police station custody unit was closed.

This consultation can also be found on the LAA website here;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/duty-solicitor-scheme-boundary-consultations>

Merthyr Tydfil, Cynon Valley and Mid Glamorgan & Miskin Police Station Schemes Further Consultation

This Consultation

This consultation paper comprises two sections:

Section 1 outlines the basis of the consultation and Duty Solicitor Schemes affected.

Section 2 outlines the options identified to change the Duty Solicitor Schemes affected within your local region.

We are consulting on these proposals for a period of 3 weeks, from 05/06/2018 to 26/06/2018.

Responses should be sent by email to sarah.mallorie@legalaid.gsi.gov.uk, entitled 'Merthyr Tydfil Rotas Further Consultation'.

Section 1 – Basis of Consultation and Duty Solicitor Schemes affected.

We previously consulted on changes to the Rotas in Merthyr Tydfil in July 2016 following the closure of Pontypridd Magistrates Court. As a result changes were made to the Court Duty Rotas which merged into one. No changes were proposed to the Police Station Rotas at that time.

In April 2018 we received a request to consider the amalgamation of the police station Rota schemes. We consulted on three options regarding the merger of the Police Station schemes on the following basis;

Option 1

As a result of the above it is proposed that the Merthyr Tydfil, Cynon Valley and Mid Glamorgan Police Station rotas merge from 1st October 2018. This would result in one Merthyr Tydfil Duty Solicitor Rota of all providers that currently qualify for these three police station schemes. It is proposed that there be three Duty Solicitors on the Rota on a daily basis.

Option 2

As a result of the above it is proposed that the Merthyr Tydfil, Cynon Valley and Mid Glamorgan Police Station rotas merge from 1st October 2018. This would result in one Merthyr Tydfil duty Solicitor Rota of all providers that currently qualify for these three police station schemes. It is proposed that there be two Duty Solicitors on the Rota on a daily basis.

Option 3

The alternative option is that the police station Rotas for Merthyr Tydfil will continue to remain separate, meaning police station duty coverage would remain as currently set.

Preferred option

Option 2 is preferred; to merge the police station schemes in line with the current Court Duty scheme. This option seemingly provides the solution that best fits the current custody working practices and call volumes.

There were two responses to the consultation and some general comments. One response proposed a further alternative option. As a result of the feedback during the first consultation we are proposing a further consultation to explore the option of having one Duty Solicitor to cover the merged Rota.

The Merthyr Tydfil Rota currently receives approximately 62 call per month and the Pontypridd Rota receives approximately 53 calls per month.

The following Police Station Duty Schemes will potentially be affected:

- Merthyr Tydfil Duty Scheme
- Cynon Valley Duty Scheme
- Mid Glamorgan & Miskin Duty Scheme

Currently the same Duty Solicitors are on the Merthyr Tydfil/Cynon Valley Rotas, the Mid Glamorgan & Miskin Rota is separate. There are currently three Duty Solicitors on the overall Merthyr Tydfil police station Rota on a daily basis.

Merthyr Tydfil, Cynon Valley and Mid Glamorgan & Miskin Police Station Schemes Further Consultation

All postcode sectors are mapped into at least one Duty Scheme. The changes proposed here will not affect this.

Determining Eligibility for revised Schemes

To assist providers in determining which Scheme(s) they are eligible to join, the postcode sectors providing access to work within each scheme, which can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/duty-solicitors-rotas-information-and-guidance> , will be updated in accordance with the outcome of this consultation.

Section 2 – Proposed revisions to schemes in the Merthyr Tydfil area

Proposed Changes

The proposed changes in this document relate only to the police station Duty Rotas. The LAA received feedback from some Providers that, as the vast majority of custody matters are now processed in Merthyr, having one police station Rota would enhance the service and the availability of Duty Solicitors and would now be preferable and has now received feedback regarding the numbers of Duty Solicitors needed to cover a merged Rota given the call volumes.

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Preferred option

Option 2 is preferred; to merge the police station schemes in line with the current Court Duty scheme with one Duty Solicitor on the Rota. This option seemingly provides the solution that best fits the current custody working practices and call volumes.

Respondents are invited to comment on these proposals and, if not in support of any of the proposals, to offer an alternative suggestion. A non-response is deemed an acceptance of the preferred option.